



How to **OVERCOME FEAR OF SELF-PROMOTION**

5 Simple Steps To Get Unstuck &
Grow Your Creative Business When
Self-Doubt Kicks In

BY CHRISTINA GREVE



HOW TO OVERCOME FEAR OF SELF-PROMOTION

If you have a fear of "putting yourself out there" and shudder at the word "self-promotion", then you'll struggle to grow your business, and you'll block yourself from making a living doing what you love.

Self-promotion is a huge stumbling block for many creatives, especially those who are introverts and highly sensitive. All those negative beliefs about selling, and promoting yourself needs to be exiled from your brain. Banished from your mental filing cabinets, and deleted until there's nothing left.

The truth is, there's nothing wrong with promoting yourself. There's nothing wrong with selling what you offer. After all that's how a business grows. And if you sell something you love, then you just sell love. Not a specific product or service and that will show. You've just been tricked into believing there's something wrong with self-promotion. But as long as what you're promoting is authentic, helpful, valuable, and beneficial, you have nothing to worry about.

Everyone doubts themselves; hourly, daily, weekly. Our brain is wired to questioning + analyze everything we do, so to break free from the fear of self-promoting, we need to be mindful about how we THINK and ACT on a daily basis.



From my coaching sessions and training programs, I know first-hand how many heart-centered entrepreneurs live in fear of being judged as "too much", arrogant, stupid, not good enough, sleazy, or selfish. They are afraid of coming across as too pushy or too aggressive. And it limits them when it comes to self-promotion.

The fear of what other people think of us is like a cage. Over time you become so used to being inside that cage, you eventually come to forget what the outside might be like. You resign yourself to living within this cage, even though you know in your heart that to grow your dream business and create the life you desire, you must be willing to "put yourself out there" for the world to see.

By taking deliberate and conscious action to overcome the fear of self-promotion and the fear of what others think of you, you slowly regain your freedom, your power and escape from the limiting comfort-zone you've created for yourself.

When you set yourself free to self-promote and allow yourself to proudly share your message with the world, you can be the person you always knew you were meant to be. And that, being fully self-expressed, being everything you know you are, fulfilling your greatest potential in life, well, that's the just the greatest feeling.



WHERE DO YOUR FEARS OF SELF-PROMOTION COME FROM?

As children, we quickly learn how to please our parents, because that's how we get love, attention and applause. It makes us feel good to be accepted and liked. Without thinking about it, we take this pleasing behaviour with us into our adult life - especially us women who were raised to be "the good girl". We simply find a natural comfort zone, balancing other people's needs, putting our own desires aside.

The problem is that the need to please others and make a good impression can become a real obstacle in your adult life. An obstacle that prevents you from growing your brand and business and instead of doing something about it, we sit and wait for our confidence and motivation to show up, so we can start promoting ourselves and grow our dream business.

But here's the truth is: the courage and the confidence to promote and sell yourself is not something that suddenly appears. YOU have to evoke it. We tend to think self-promotion requires confidence, but confidence comes from taking action and actually doing it, taking chances and putting yourself out there.





DON'T BLAME YOURSELF...

I hear many creatives blaming themselves for having this fear of self-promotion. They get angry and frustrated with themselves, but it only makes the situation worse.

There's absolutely NOTHING wrong with you! The truth is that no one has ever taught you how to promote yourself. No wonder you are confused. I mean no one suddenly wakes up one day a world-class self-promoter.

Mastering self-promotion is a SKILL, and you can learn to master that skill no matter how shy or introvert you are. I promise you that - you might even come to love it when you discover how liberating it can be.

The fastest way to become successful at self-promotion is allowing yourself to step into your light. Allowing yourself to shine and be you - authentic and real.

When you start to self-promote despite your fears, the worries will slowly die and leave you alone. And that's where real confidence appears.

I used to be terrified of self-promotion. But I learned along the way that if I wanted to grow my business to 6 or 7 figures, I had no other choice than to embrace it. As soon as I started to share my voice, my creative work and my writings everything changed.



STOP WAITING FOR PERMISSION TO SHINE

If there's ONE THING I've learned from my many years as a creative entrepreneur, as well as from coaching thousands of clients, it's this: STOP WAITING FOR PERMISSION!

The fact is no one will come and give it to you. Only you can give it to you. And what's even worse; when you wait for permission, you squander your most precious resource: your time! The sooner you give yourself permission to self-promote and show off your genius, the faster your business will thrive.

Stop waiting to claim the life you truly deserve. The stars will never be perfectly aligned, but that's OK. You got to start promoting yourself to break the cycle. You got to start before you are ready. You got to start before you, and everything you do is perfect - because that perfect time will never arrive.

It's time for a new beginning...

So, if you're an introvert or someone who doesn't like giving yourself credit and applause, how do you learn to promote yourself without feeling that you are bragging or selling in a sleazy way?

The first step is to shift your negative beliefs about self-promotion and turn it into something positive. Because if self-promoting is done right, it really is a super FUN and energizing activity, you'll end up loving, and you can start right now by implementing the following five strategies:



#1 PROMOTE VALUE & BENEFITS

I get it; you don't want to annoy people. We all know that person who is ALWAYS trying to get you to like their page / read their blog post / buy their thing – the one who you want to unfollow / unsubscribe / unfriend because OMG SO ANNOYING. The reason this person is so annoying is because they are constantly asking you to do things without providing something in return.

If you are providing real value, people won't be annoyed even if you're in their face every day. And to be honest, if you're worried about being annoying – you probably won't be. Heart-centered entrepreneurs may have a fear of selling, but we take any opportunity to help our customers and improve their lives.

People seek you for a reason. They want your help, products or service because they believe in and like what you have to offer. So think of self-promotion like this; you actually aren't here to sell, you are here to serve, guide and share inspiration.

The promotion of work that provides value is a generous act, not a selfish one. Be generous with your expertise, creativity, and creations. People won't hate you for it —they'll thank you for it. So, instead of holding yourself back when it comes to promoting your awesome new thing, just remember the benefits it will provide to someone.



#2 THINK OF THAT ONE PERSON



When you start to self-doubt, always remind yourself WHY you started your blog or business in the first place. Your “why” has the power to remove any doubt about who is reading along when you self-promote. No matter how big or small your audience, just remember someone IS reading and care about what you have to say.

Think about that ONE person out there that needs what only you can give. Stop focusing on the number of likes and comments you may or may not receive - it’s not important at all. I know plenty of creatives who make a profitable living with just a small number of followers, and I know plenty of influencers with hundreds of thousands of followers who make no money. The difference between them is HOW they promote and connect with their audience.

Think about that one person you can impact today. Trust that what you post have the power to help, serve and inspire. If you can touch just that ONE person out there, you’ve already made a huge impact on the world. You don’t need to impress anyone or please everyone with what you share; you just have to let it come from your heart and offer something unique for that ONE person.

#3 ACCEPT THAT YOU CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE

The fact is that you'll never live up to the standards of what "everyone" wants you to be, so why fight a battle you can never win. Instead, focus on being MORE of who you're meant to be and focus less on what THEY think you should be. You might not see your own beauty but if you continue to conceal and hide who you are, the people that's right for you won't be able to find you either.

If you fear trolls and naysayers because let's be real; the negative people ready to leave a hurtful comment are definitely out there. Remember this; you cannot control the behaviour of others. Yet you absolutely control the way you respond to and internalize their words and actions.

You can choose to be hurt, or you can choose to be amused. You can choose to be angry and offended, or you can choose to be informed, calm, thoughtful, in control. Sometimes other people seek to hurt your feelings, sometimes they do it out of ignorance or carelessness. But none of that matters because it is their problem and its about their insecurities, not yours.





LAUGH IT OFF AND MOVE ON

You have better ways to invest your thoughts, your time, your energy. Let your feelings be based on what you choose, not on anyone else's foolish behaviour.

And feel the solid, authentic power and confidence it gives you. Don't let the fear of what other people think stop you from living the life you desire.

I have personally made a firm decision not to allow anyone with negative energy to take space in my life.

So if I self-promote and someone leaves a rude, or hurtful comment, I simply delete it. I don't even take a second to consider what they're up to or why they do what they do. And I certainly don't spend time giving them an answer.

I just delete, remove and move on. I do not take it personally because I know that their behaviour has nothing to do with me - they are just reacting out of something that's currently happening in their lives that I have no control over.

And it's liberating to know that I don't have to respond or react to it. You don't owe anyone a response.

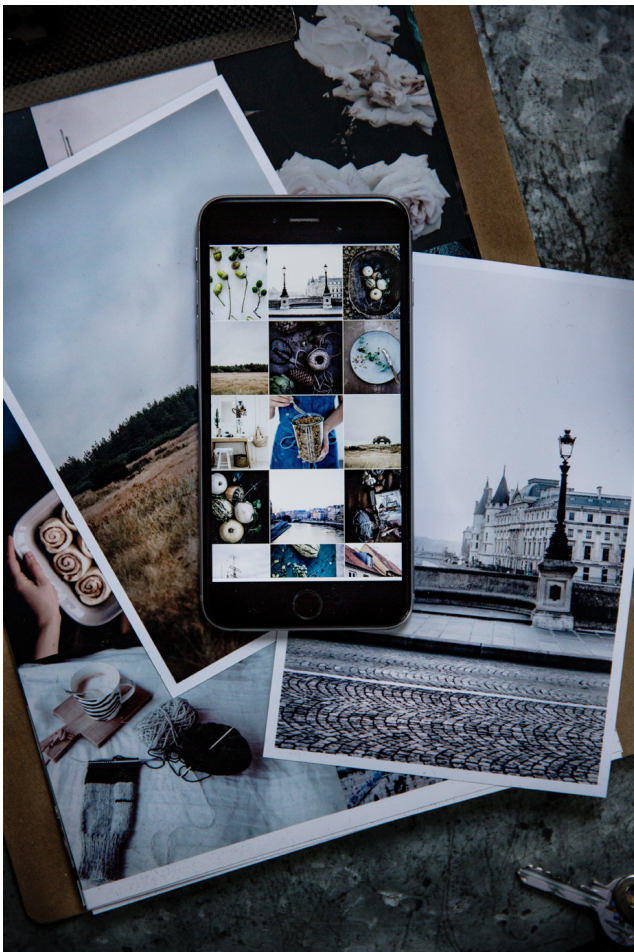
#4 CHOOSE PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

If you stop yourself from "putting yourself out there" because you get hung up on perfection, it's time to change things around. Stop overthinking it, just hit publish, and remember you can always edit, or delete later.

What people need is not perfection but authenticity - a person to whom they can relate. So if you're waiting for everything to be perfect before you post something or promote your newest offer; stop. Start without the perfect circumstances, begin without that beautiful logo, offer your service even though your product or skills are not fully developed yet.

If I had waited to start promoting myself until the day my written and spoken English was perfect, I would never have been able to create a thriving international business. My English is still far from perfect, but I know that the value I offer is much more important than me being perfect. So who am I to stop helping people just because my English isn't perfect. It would be a selfish act, don't you think?





Focus more on the process of creating value, and serving your audience and less on whether people will like it or not. Once you start to see yourself as someone who doesn't hesitate and who just takes action, you become more confident. The key is to go for PROGRESS, not perfection.

Doubts don't necessarily go away; I think you just learn to smile at them and brush them off. What matter is that you keep doing your thing! If you spend your life playing it safe, sticking to what's comfortable, you're missing out on the possibilities of what could be, because your business success is on the other side of self-promotion.

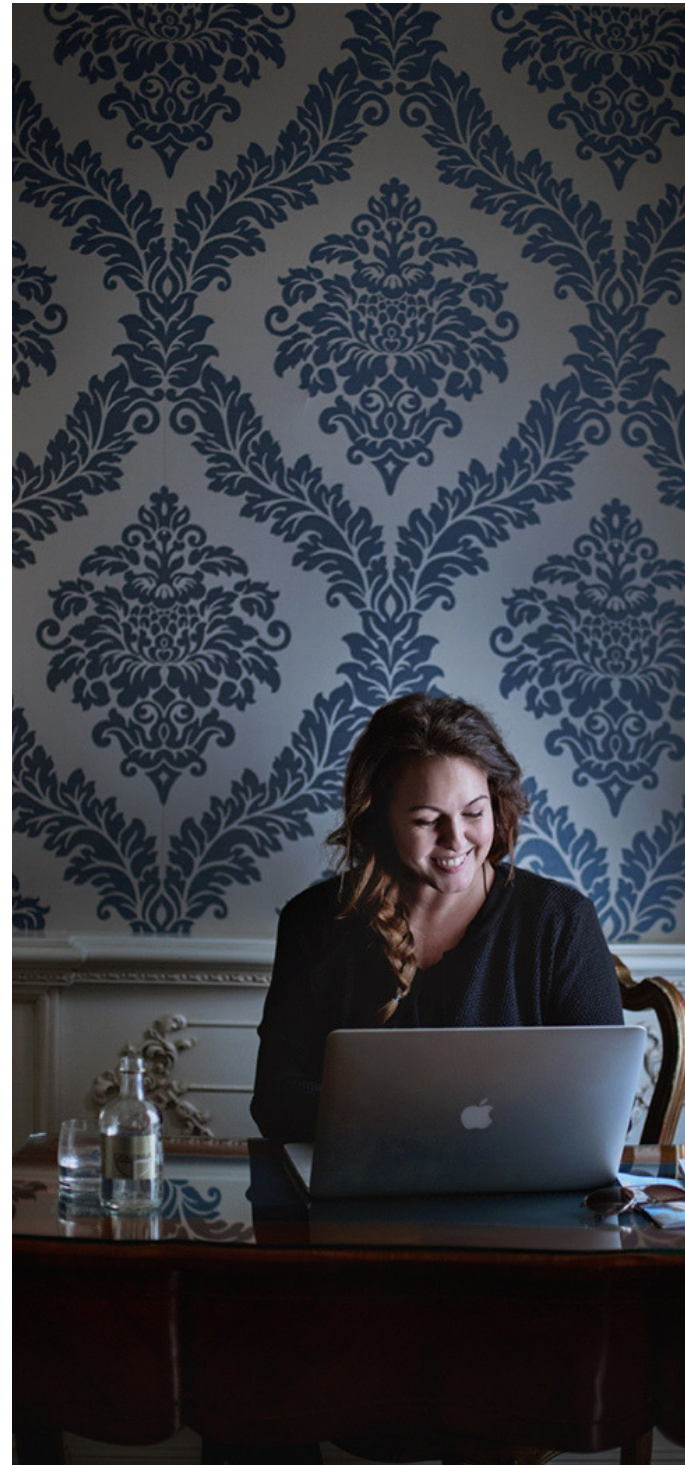
Your comfort zone might be a comfortable place to rest but there's very little growth there so focus on living outside of it, and your growth will be off the charts.

#5 CHOOSE CONSISTENCY & BE VISIBLE

Consistency is key when it comes to self-promotion, yet many creatives are so afraid to be annoying or step on someone's toes that they only self-promote a few times a year. They might send out an email twice a year, share a post on Facebook once a month or write a blog post they never promote, but just hope people will find by themselves.

You got to be consistent, and you got to be visible to succeed and turn your passion into profit. This doesn't mean you have to go around telling everyone, "look at me! hire me!" – but it does mean you need to show up regularly and build relationships. Be helpful, and people will notice you. Self-promotion does not ensure you a sale. Self-promotion is the stuff you do to build awareness for your brand and reach potential clients.

Self-promotion is the process of converting your audience into actual paying clients later on. Often potential clients need to be in contact with you and see your offerings many times before they are ready to buy - therefore consistency and visibility are key factors to selling successfully.





If you're just starting out and find it overwhelming to overcome your fear of self-promotion I suggest you follow these guidelines:

- Send out an email once a month
- Post on your Facebook page once a week
- Post on Instagram three times a week
- Write a blog post every second week

Focus on giving value and re-use your content. For example, your blog post can also be the content of your email. And you can take phrases from your blog post and use them in your social media caption. This makes it much easier for you to be consistent without being too overwhelmed. When you get into the rhythm and start to build momentum you can expand your self-promotion to become more often.

When you get more advanced your self-promotion could look like this:

- Email: twice a week
- Facebook: once daily
- Instagram: once daily
- Blog post: once or twice a week

And of course, you can go even further and add a podcast series, a Youtube channel or use other social media platforms. It's all up to you. Listen to your heart and make sure to make it into a FUN activity, not a chore, because your audience will feel your energy or the lack of it.

FINAL THOUGHTS...

Remind yourself that your fear of self-promotion is just a tiny part of who you are – it's not ALL of you.

You are much more than that, and you deserve to act on your dreams and goals. Mental strength is built through lots of small, daily victories. It's the individual choices we make day-to-day that builds our "mental strength" muscles.

Waiting for the fear to go away is just a form of procrastination. Now is the time to get moving, I promise you'll figure things out as you go.

You can do this. Remember courage and motivation never just suddenly appear - it arises from you taking the first step! Taking action is the **ONLY** thing that can help you break out of that cage called fear.

Dive in and learn how to swim while you're taking action. And you'll discover it isn't so hard once you get momentum. No more waiting for permission.

No more holding yourself back. There are people out there who needs your special sauce - they need what only you can give them. Now go and share your awesomeness and make the world a better place.